

15 March 2016

Dear General Manager,

NSW Council Boundaries Review

Please circulate this letter to all planners within your Council

As NSW councils consider the implications of the NSW Boundary Review on their processes and the staff of those councils, the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) would like to offer support to local government planners across NSW.

PIA is the national body representing planning and the planning profession. Through advocacy, education, communication and professional development, PIA is the pivotal organisation serving and guiding thousands of planning professionals in their role of creating better communities.

PIA currently represents approximately 4,800 members nationally and internationally, and connects with 7500 planners annually. We are a member-based organisation with its management complemented by volunteers, who support and contribute to our activities on various levels.

Role of planners

PIA believes that council mergers have the potential to provide numerous opportunities for planners working in Local Government:

- Strategic planning, especially the Community Strategic Plan, is of utmost importance for councils, and your planning team can play an important role in assisting through this process.
- Opportunities for improved collaboration between State and Local Government, particularly in relation to regional planning and planning reform generally. Planners can and should be at the forefront of advocating and managing relevant changes.
- Larger councils will have better resource capacities, scale and regional perspectives to enhance strategic and infrastructure planning. New councils should be able to better self-manage issues such as strategic planning, infrastructure planning and prioritisation, urban renewal via priority precincts and development assessment.
- A more regional approach to support strategic planning and economic development is one of the main State Government rationales for amalgamations. Planners have the skills to assist with the delivery of many of the State Government objectives as reflected in Regional Plans, District Plans and Local Environmental Plans.
- Planners are professionally trained and highly capable of engaging with the community to define strategic directions and objectives and then design the mechanisms to achieve them. Planners are required to provide for existing communities and also understand and

- plan for the needs of future communities. Planning professionals are well placed to lead and guide these processes.

Role of PIA

In response to the proposed amalgamations, as the national body representing planning and the planning profession PIA will:

- Support enhancement of the effectiveness of planning and planners;
- Support planners in terms of professional, career and personal circumstances as a consequence of workplace changes;
- Advocate and provide support for the crucial role that planners can and should take in the change management processes; and
- Provide information and services to support planners' understanding of the implications of new structures, positions, integration of LEPs and planning policies etc. This includes the arrangement of relevant events, professional development and public communications.

PIA has a benchmarked set of competencies for what skills make a great planner around which our highest grade of membership is assessed and our range of Continuing Professional Development training programs are developed. This is further enhanced by our audited CPD policy and a Code of Professional Conduct defining professional standards.

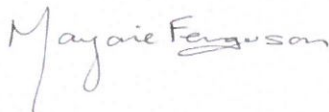
We conduct regular regional events for planning professionals, providing opportunities for professional development and for networking. In addition we offer online and face to face courses designed specifically for planners. Our annual conferences and forums serve to bring a full range of professional planners together. These events are open to all. Members of the Institute are eligible for discounted registration and to attend Member-only events. Information on membership of the Institute can be found at <http://www.planning.org.au/membershipinformation>

As NSW President of the Institute I offer my support, and that of our Divisional Committee to assist councils. We are happy to meet with groups of council planners and senior management and we will continue to represent the views of planners through meetings and events, advocacy and by making submissions.

Members of our Committee can be contacted via our NSW Office – email nswmanager@planning.org.au

We look forward to hearing how we can assist your staff throughout this process and throughout their careers in the longer term.

Yours Sincerely



Marjorie Ferguson MPIA CPP

NSW President



16 March 2016

Ms Marjorie Ferguson
NSW President
Planning Institute Australia

Dear Ms Ferguson

NSW Boundaries Review and your letter of 16 March to general managers

I'm writing in response to your letter today to local government general managers in which you make a number of observations about the role of planners but I write specifically in relation to assertions we believe to be presumptuous and misrepresentations of PIA's role. For example, that you will:

- Support planners in terms of professional, career and personal circumstances *as a consequence of workplace changes*;
- Advocate and provide support for the crucial role that *planners can and should take on the change management processes*; and
- *Provide information services to support planners' understanding of the implications of new structures, positions*, integration etc.

If your intention was to draft correspondence urging planners to join PIA because you can provide professional training, then the letter lacks those specifics and instead sounds like you are purporting to have an expertise and capacity to assist planners in local government in the workplace - something, of course, you don't have, you have never had, and as far as everyone is aware, you have never claimed to have developed.

Your homepage respectfully contains your role within the boundaries it has occupied historically and these three assertions are well, well outside what you say to be your key roles - namely, "promoting and supporting the planning profession within NSW and advocating on key planning a public policy issues." In fact this is our job.

There are significant and dramatic things happening in local government and while PIA may see a marketing opportunity to provide educational and training services, PIA has neither the expertise, capacity nor opportunity to assist employees in the industry deal with workplace changes, or in change management processes, or the implications of new structures or positions.

Please phone me as soon as possible to discuss how we can properly clarify your role with the industry. I would prefer this to be correspondence from you, but I'm happy to do it myself.

Regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ian Robertson', with a long, sweeping underline.

Ian Robertson
Secretary